

Remarks

The Official Office Action of June 8, 2005, and the references therein made of record have been carefully considered.

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-4, 8, 16-18 and 20-22 as fully met by Hoffman.

Applicant has amended claim 1 in several respects: (1) the term "cane" has been replaced by "walking aid", (2) the handles are recited as comprising exterior surfaces which are juxtaposed in the position where the walking aids are joined together and (3) part of claim 5 has been incorporated into claim 1, i.e. that the handles, in the side-by-side position of the support exteriors, provide a combined handle for grasping by the user when the convertible walking support is used as a single device. It will accordingly be seen that the combined handle is made up of part of the exterior of both handles. It is evident that Hoffman's handles are nested, one inside the other, so the handle exteriors are not juxtaposed in side-by-side relation and the handle exteriors do not, in the side-by-side position of the support exteriors provide a combined handle. It is accordingly submitted that claim 1 and its dependent claims 2-6, 8-11, 13, 14 and 21 are allowable over the art of record.

Claim 7 was objected to as depending on a rejected claim. Claim 7 has been rewritten in independent form, incorporating the

limitations of claim 1. It is accordingly submitted that claim 7 is allowable.

Claim 16 has been amended in much the same manner as claim 1, i.e. (1) the handles are recited as comprising exterior surfaces which are juxtaposed in the position where the walking aids are joined together and (2) part of claim 5 has been incorporated into claim 1, i.e. that the handles, in the side-by-side position of the support exteriors, provide a combined handle for grasping by the user when the convertible walking support is used as a single device. It is accordingly submitted that claim 16 and its dependent claims 17 and 22 are allowable.

Claim 20 is the only method claim in the case and it has also been amended along the same lines as claims 1 and 16 and is accordingly believed to be allowable over the art of record.

It is submitted that this application is in condition for allowance and early steps toward that end are earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



G. Turner Moller
Registration 22,978

711 North Carancahua, Suite 720
Corpus Christi, Texas 78475
361/883-7257
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